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SUBJECT: RUSSIA AND POLAND HOLD MISSILE DEFENSE TALKS

Classified By: Acting Political M/C David Kostelancik. Reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) On December 19 a Russian delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov and Lieutenant-General Yevgeniy Buzhinskiy hosted a Polish delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister (and former Ambassador to the United States) Przemyslaw Grudzinski to discuss Polish missile defense (MD) transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs). Russian MFA DVBR First Secretary Oleg Kovalenko told us the Polish TCBMs contained nothing new, and were similar to U.S. TCBMs.

12. (C) According to Kovalenko, the main issue regarding Polish TCBMs was access to the proposed MD facility and satisfying Polish demands for reciprocity. He pointed out that the GOR does not demand access to proposed MD sites in Poland; this was purely a U.S. and Polish proposal. Kovalenko said inspecting Russian facilities, including possible Iskander missile bases in Kaliningrad, could be discussed "only if there is true transparency regarding U.S. MD plans." The time was not right, he said, to formally make such a proposal.

13. (C) Kovalenko said the GOR was pleasantly surprised by the Polish offer to exchange information regarding the MD facilities. He said that, while Russia is ready to exchange information and "face future threats together," the GOR and Poland have not yet agreed on a mechanism for information-sharing. Russia, Kovalenko said, wants to work together with Poland (and the U.S.) on MD, and "awaits Poland's move," including its offer on how to share information.
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